

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-12 (Canceled)

Claim 13 (**new**): A low sliding load intermediate shaft for a motor vehicle steering column, comprising:

a female member slidably receiving a male member therein, said female and male members having a substantially triangular shape with blunt vertexes;

a plurality of metal strips separate from said male member, each of said metal strips having an uneven contact surface; and

a continuous fastening cage fitted between said female member and said male member, said fastening cage having sides corresponding to sides of said triangular shape of said female and male members, said fastening cage having a plurality of recesses, each of said recesses being individually arranged on said sides of said fastening cage, respectively, corresponding to said sides of said triangular shape, and

wherein each of said metal strips being received in each of said plurality of recesses, respectively, such that said metal strips are distributed on each of said sides of said triangular shape of said female and male members.

Claim 14 (**new**): A low sliding load intermediate shaft, according to claim 13, wherein

said cage is clamped to the outside of said male member by deformations on a lateral side thereof.

Claim 15: (**new**) A low sliding load intermediate shaft, according to claim 13, wherein

said male member has blunt surfaces.